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Lorne Gunter
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Prime Minister Justin Trudeau addresses the media during a tour of the Stellantis Windsor Assembly Plant in Windsor, Ont., Jan. 17, 2023. PHOTO BY REBECCA COOK /REUTERS

One-fifth of Canadians currently find the cost of heating their homes and keeping the lights on to be a “significant financial burden,” according to internal polling conducted for the federal Natural Resources department.



A majority (54%) report paying more than \$200 a month on heating bills alone. In Alberta, that rises to 82% and in Atlantic Canada 66%.

Not surprisingly, older Canadians reported being the hardest hit: 31% of Canadians over 55 say heating costs have forced them to curtail other purchases, such as travel, food and non-essentials, because as a group they are more likely to be on fixed incomes.

Of course, to make matters worse, inflation on food is nearly double that of the general inflation rate.

While the general rate dropped to 6.3% in December (from 6.8% in November), Statistics Canada reports that the inflation rate on groceries remained over 11%.

And some staples, such as eggs, are nearly 50% more expensive this year than they were last.



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One of the few bright spots has been gasoline prices. While they did soar mid-year, they are now only three per cent above where they were before Russia invaded Ukraine and sent international oil prices skyrocketing at this time last year.

No doubt, the “significant burden” will also increase if the expected recession materializes driving tens or even hundreds of thousands of Canadians out of work.

Many families will soon be having to decide between heating their homes and providing three meals a day.

Once again, though, our inept federal government has only excuses to offer.

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau merely shrugged that, “The inflation challenges the world is facing right now is a global challenge.” In other words, don’t blame us. It’s out of our control. Don’t expect us to fix it.

But it is not true that inflation is worldwide and beyond the ability of domestic governments to fix.

Japan, Switzerland, Hong Kong and a few other developed nations did not go crazy with pandemic spending. They did not flood their economies with borrowed billions, driving down the value of their currencies and driving up inflation.

Now those countries have inflation about half the rate of ours, because unlike the Bank of Canada and the Trudeau cabinet, their governments and central banks understood that short-term overspending leads to long-term fiscal pain.

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The Liberals are making extra billions off struggling Canadians via the federal carbon tax, which rakes in more and more revenue every time the cost of heating homes rises during the cold, Canadian winter. The government also refuses to postpone its planned increase of the carbon tax on April 1.

They would prefer Canadians have to scrimp and sacrifice on food and clothing rather than give up their ideological crusade to save the planet with taxes on fossil fuels.

So obsessed is the federal eco-cult with climate alarmism that the Liberal-NDP coalition won't even take the carbon tax off food production and distribution.

Battling the climate-change theory is a higher priority to Trudeau and NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh than ensuring Canadian families have warm homes, good jobs and adequate food. It's appalling.

If the Liberal government would permit it, Canada could develop its resources more fully, making us less dependent on foreign oil. That, too, would help control costs for consumers while also increasing employment and standards of living.

It would improve the environment, too.

Canada has among the cleanest resources in the world. Every time we sell oil or gas to countries that rely on coal, we reduce global emissions.

Yet even that is too much for the climate fundamentalists, extremists and zealots who make up the Trudeau government.



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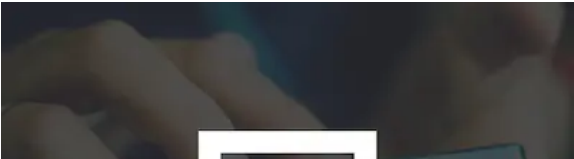
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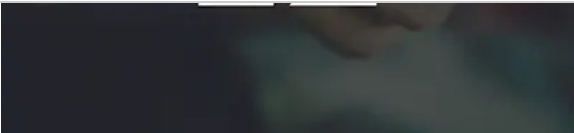
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